

Overview of Requirements for Competitive Foods

PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOT CHOOSING HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION

Public schools that choose **not** to implement the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification (HFC) under [Section 10-215f](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) must comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Smart Snacks nutrition standards for competitive foods, and any stricter provisions of state requirements, including the:

- state beverage statute (C.G.S. [Section 10-221q](#));
- state statute requiring nutritious and low-fat foods (C.G.S. [Section 10-221p](#)); and
- state competitive foods regulation addressing accrual of income (Section 10-215b-23 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies).

The Smart Snacks nutrition standards apply to all schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). They address the sale of competitive foods to students on school campus during the school day, from the cafeteria, vending machines, schools stores, fundraisers and any other sources of food and beverage sales.

- “**Competitive foods**” are all foods and beverages available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day, separately from reimbursable school meals.
- “**Sale**” means the exchange of foods and beverages for a determined amount of money or its equivalent, such as tickets, coupons, tokens and similar items. This includes any activities that suggest a student donation in exchange for foods and beverages.
- The “**school campus**” is all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.
- The “**school day**” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.



ALLOWABLE FOODS

All competitive foods sold during the school day in non-HFC public schools must comply with the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. Foods that do not comply with Smart Snacks can only be sold **after** the school day. For example, if the school day ends at 3:00 p.m., noncompliant foods can be sold from 3:31 p.m. through 11:59 p.m. For information on the Smart Snacks nutrition standards, see the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) handout, [Summary of Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards](#).



ALLOWABLE BEVERAGES

All beverages sold to students in public schools must comply with the Smart Snacks beverage standards and the stricter provisions of the state beverage statute (C.G.S. Section 10-221q). The Smart Snacks beverage standards apply only to beverages sold to students separately from school meals during the **school day**. The state beverage statute applies to:

- all beverages sold to students at **all times** as part of school meals and separately from school meals; and
- all public schools, regardless of whether they participate in the USDA school nutrition programs.

Beverages that do not comply with the state beverage statute can only be sold to students on school premises if the local board of education or school governing authority votes to allow exemptions, and the beverages are sold at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided they are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “**event**” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals and debate team meetings are not. For information on the beverage requirements, see the CSDE’s handout, [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Schools](#), and [Beverage Requirements](#) Web page.



OTHER STATE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to meeting the state and federal nutrition standards for foods and beverages, all public schools must comply with the state competitive foods regulations (Section 10-215b-23 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies) and the state statute requiring healthy food choices (C.G.S. Section 10-221p). These requirements are summarized below.

State Competitive Foods Regulations (Section 10-215b-23)

The state regulations apply to all USDA school nutrition programs, e.g., NSLP, SBP, Afterschool Snack Program and Special Milk Program.

Section 10-215b-23 requires that the income from any foods and beverages sold to students anywhere on school premises from

30 minutes before up through 30 minutes after any USDA school nutrition programs must accrue to the nonprofit **food service account**. For example, if the breakfast period is from 7:00 a.m. through 8:00 a.m. and the lunch period is from 11:30 a.m. through 1:00 p.m., the school food service program must receive the income from all competitive foods and beverages sold anywhere on school premises from 6:30 a.m. through 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. through 1:30 p.m. This includes sales of foods that comply with the Smart Snacks and sales of beverages that comply with the state beverage statute and Smart Snacks. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, [Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations](#).



Requirement to Sell Nutritious Low-fat Foods (C.G.S. Section 10-221p)

C.G.S. [Section 10-221p](#) applies to all public schools regardless of whether they participate in the USDA school nutrition programs. This statute requires that whenever foods are available for purchase by students during the regular school day, nutritious and low-fat foods must also be available for sale at the same time, either at the location of the food sales or elsewhere in the school.



“Nutritious and low-fat foods” include low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit. Examples of low-fat dairy products include low-fat or nonfat yogurt, cheese and cottage cheese. Low-fat milk is a beverage and cannot be used to meet the statutory requirement for low-fat foods. Schools may choose to sell other nutrient-dense foods in addition to the minimum requirements, such as vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds, and lean protein sources. For more information, see the CSDE’s [handout, *Questions and Answers on Connecticut Statutes for School Foods and Beverages*](#).

FEDERAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Public schools may have additional local requirements governing food and beverage sales as part of their local school wellness policy. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 ([Public Law 108-265](#)) and the [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010](#) require school wellness policies for all schools and institutions that participate in the USDA school nutrition programs. Among other criteria, the policy must include “*nutrition guidelines for all foods available at school during the school day*” with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. For more information on school wellness policies, see the CSDE’s [Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies](#) and [School Wellness Policy](#) Web page, and the USDA’s [School Wellness Policy](#) Web Page.

The CSDE’s [Guide to Competitive Foods in Schools](#) provides detailed information on how the state and federal requirements apply to specific categories of foods and beverages. The CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) identifies foods and beverages that comply with all state and federal requirements.

RESOURCES

Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Schools:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/allowbev.pdf

Beverage Requirements (CSDE Web Page):

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418

Competitive Foods (CSDE Web Page):

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772

Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/ctcfreg.pdf

Guide to Competitive Foods in Schools:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/cfg.pdf

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE Web Page):

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432

COMPETITIVE FOODS IN NON-HFC PUBLIC SCHOOLS, continued

RESOURCES, continued

National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School:
www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/pdf/2013-15249.pdf

School Foods and Beverages (CSDE Web Page):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322416

Questions and Answers on Connecticut Statutes for School Foods and Beverages:
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cgsqa.pdf

Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores (Non-HFC Public Schools):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storenonhfc.pdf

Food and Beverage Requirements for Vending Machines (Non-HFC Public Schools):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendnonhfc.pdf

Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers (Non-HFC Public Schools):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundnonhfc.pdf

Requirements for Beverages Containing Water and Juice:
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/waterjuicebev.pdf

Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (CSDE Web Page):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400

Summary of Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards:
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/smartsnacks.pdf



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Competitive Foods](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#) Web pages or contact the [school nutrition programs](#) staff in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457.

This handout is available at www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/regnonhfc.pdf.

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